allocated to Southern States for tackling drought conditions during the current year as on date, State-wise is as under:

State	Foodgrains demanded	Foodgrains allocated
Andhra Pradesh	15.00	1.00
Karnataka	9.90	1.65

(d) and (e) The allocation of foodgrains for relief employment in the wake of drought is made from time to time, under the Special Component of Sampoorna Gramin Rojgar Yojana, taking into account the requirement projected by the States, relief works undertaken, actual utilization etc.

Procurement of paddy, rice and bajra

233. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present status of procurement of paddy, rice and bajra in different States; State-wise;

(b) whether Government have received complaints of distress sale of these commodities by farmers;

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(d) what steps Government have taken to procure the entire stocks of these commodities and prevent their distress sale?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) A Statement showing the procurement of paddy, rice and bajra, State-wise'during the current Kharif Marketing Season 2003-04 is given in the enclosed Statement (see below)

(b) and (c) No reports of distress sale of paddy/rice/coarse grains conforming to FAQ specifications at below MSP rates have been received by Central Government.

(d) In order to mitigate the hardships of farmers and to avoid the possibility of distress sale, the prescribed specifications for procurement of paddy have been relaxed in the States of Bihar and Orissa. The specifications of Bajra have also been relaxed for the State of Rajasthan.

Statement

State-wise procurement of paddy, levy rice and bajra during the kharif marketing season 2003-2004 (till 27-11 -2003)

(Figures in '000 tonnes)

S.No. State/UT	Paddy	Levy Rice	Bajra
1. Andhra Pradesh	43	1	2
2. Bihar	Neg.	•	•
3. Chhatisgarh	294	-	-
4. Haryana	1017	287	199
5. Himachal Pradesh	-	**1**	-
6. Maharashtra	20	•	Neg.
7. Orissa	Neg.	Neg.	•
8. Punjab	9845	833	•
9. Rajasthan	20	1	32
10. Uttaranchal	4	•	-
11. Uttar Pradesh	108	-	-
TOTAL :	11351	1123	23

Procurement of Wheat by Private Sector

234. PROF M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to allow private sector to enter procurement operation of wheat;

(b) if so, the details of the new policy of Government;

(c) what would be the impact of this policy; and

(d) whether Government are also considering similar mechanism in operating of other items?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) to (d) As per present policy of the Government foodgrains trade is free in the country and there is no restriction on